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The author is over-sanguine when he says in the preface that "no boy or girl should leave school without at least as much knowledge of the life about us and of our relations to the animal world as should be found in a book of this sort."

There are several statements in the text which should be modified or changed, and one or two figures which ought to disappear in subsequent editions.

A revision of the glossary would greatly improve the book.

The introduction of many names of large groups of animals without any other notice, and fragmentary mentions of others, may require explanations from the teacher if the pupil is expected to master the book.

On the whole the "First Lessons" is one of the best textbooks of its kind with which we are familiar, and will doubtless prove of great service in those schools where it is used.

The book gives a good picture of the science of zoölogy. There is a great amount of information in its pages, and the text is clear and concise. The language is free from technicalities, and the figures as a general thing well chosen.—*J. W. F.*

STUDIES FROM THE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORIES OF THE OWENS COLLEGE.¹—The biological department of the Owens College, Manchester, England, under the able direction of Professor A. Milnes Marshall, has just published the first volume of its "Studies." It contains reprints of several articles by the professor and his students as well as some which are new. Among these latter are Mr. Marshall Ward's paper on an aquatic Myxomycete found growing on the roots of hyacinths; Mr. A. Dendy's paper on the regeneration of the visceral mass in Antedon; and Mr. C. F. Marshall's studies of the physiology of the nervous system of the lobster.

RECENT BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

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Montgomery, E.—The Substantiality of Life.

—Ueber das Protoplasma einiger "Elementar-organismen."

—Zur lehre von der Muskelcontraktion. 1881.

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—The dependence of quality on specific energies.

—The unity of the organic individual I, II. Extract from "Mind." All from the author.

Froriep, A.—Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Wirbelsäule. I. Beobachtung an Hühnerembryonen. Ext. Arch. f. Anat. & Phys.

—Beobachtung an Säugethierembryonen. Ext. idem. Both from the author.

Albrecht, P.—Ueber die morphologische Bedeutung der Penisches Epi- und Hypospadie des Menschen, 1886. Ext. Biologische Centralblatt.

—Sur la non-homologies des pneumons des vertébrés pulmonés avec la vessie natatoire des poissons.

¹ *Studies from the Biological Laboratories of Owens College.* Vol. I, pp. 328, fourteen plates, 1886.

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 —Zur Zwischenkieferfrage. Ext. Fortschritte der Medicin, 1885.
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 —Experiments antagonizing the view that the serrulæ (serrated appendages) of
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- Herdman, W. A.*—Report upon the Tunicata.
- Theel, H.*—Report upon the Holothuroidea. This and the preceding from The
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- Stefanescu, G.*—Annuaire du Bureau Geologique de la Roumanie 1882-83. From
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GENERAL NOTES.

GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVELS.¹

ASIA.—*The Aralo-Caspian basin.*—M. Moushketoff believes that the Amu-daria may once have joined the Sir-daria before entering the basin of the Aral and Sary-kamysh lakes; but later on the Amu entered the Sary-kamysh or western part of the double lake, while the Sir-daria flowed into the Aral part. Gradually the Amu, as appears by the orography of the region, undermined the Sultan-uiz-dagh hills, and finally, finding its way through them, entered the Aral. The Sary-kamysh, deprived of its water, rapidly dried up. The bed of this lake is fifty feet below that of the Caspian, and covers a surface of 4400 square miles. The Aral is now also rapidly receding. The Albughir gulf has disappeared, the Sary-cheganak gulf is converted into a lake as is also the Kamyshlybash, which the Kirghis remember to have been connected with the Aral. The evaporation at Astrakhan exceeds the rainfall by five times, at Tashkend by three times, while at Nukus it is twenty-seven and at Petro-Alexandrovsk thirty-six times the rainfall. The Uzboy is, by M. Moushketoff, believed to be a marine outlet which connected the Caspian and

¹ This department is edited by W. N. LOCKINGTON, Philadelphia.